The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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The Snow-Storm.

Lightly and whitely
As wheat from the grain,
Thickly and quickly
As thoughts through the brain,
So fast and so dumb
Do the snow-flakes come;—
Swift, swift as the lays drop
From glad poet-lips,
Soft, soft as the days drop
From Time's finger-tips.
Oh, so many, so many!

Yet no sound from any.
Oh, so fast, oh, so fast!
Yet no track where they passed.
Oh, so fragile, so frail!
Yet no force can prevail
To speed them or stay them.
They fall where they must,
Through the fathomless gray,
And bring to earth's dust
What of heaven they may.—*Selected*

Consolation.

Poor pussy, your heart is 'most broken,
You're not even purring at all;
I know, just as if you had spoken,
You're thinking of Spotty and Squall.

Well, they *were* just the cunningest kittens,
But they might have made very bad cats;
Little Spot had begun, you remember,
To chew of the fur from the mats.

Just think of the dear little birdies,
And the soft little mice they would kill,
And the cream they would steal from the pantry—
As mischievous kittens all will.

Yes, they might have grown up very wicked,
Instead of your joy and your pride;
So don't grieve any longer, old pussy—
It's a very good thing that they died.—*Selected.*

The Lesson Jack Learned.

HERE'S yer Evening Jour—nal. All about the 'lec—tion. Only two cents."

Jack sang his song outside his grandmother's gate, letting his voice fall a minor third on the last syllable of each clause, as all the other boys did. It was only by way of a joke that he sang it there; but it was as good a way as any of letting her know he was coming and would want his supper at once, so that he might be off again without any loss of time.

"You always have it ready for me, grandmother," he said, as she placed the big bowl of bread and milk on the table. "I'll be all sold out in another hour, and then I'll have time to read to you after I've studied my lesson."

Jack ate at first with the appetite of a hearty, hungry boy; but at length his spoon moved more slowly, and he balanced it on the edge of the bowl, looking as if some weighty matter were on his mind.

"Seems to me you have to work dreadful hard, grandmother," he said, looking at her as she bent over her sewing.

"Well, you work hard, too, Jack."

"Yes." He looked grave, thinking how early he had to get up in the morning in order to have his wood cut and his other chores done before going to school.

"Don't you like work?" asked his grandmother.

"Yes, but not too much work. I think it would be pretty nice if we could have things fixed for us as they were for some one they were telling about in Sunday school."

"How was that?" she asked.

"Well, there was a famine. And there was a

man named Elijah, and he was a good man, and first of all the Lord sent ravens to take things to him. Just think, grandmother, every morning great birds coming with all you wanted, and not cost you a cent!

"And after that Elijah went to a widow that lived—oh, somewhere or other—and then how do you think they managed? Why, grandmother, they had a barrel with just a little bit of meal in it, and when it was gone, every day, every day there kept coming more and more. Now, what do you think of that?"

"It was a wonderful thing, my boy."

"Yes, I guess it was! said Jack, bringing his hand down on the table with a sounding clap. "And I don't see why the Lord don't do things that way now."

"What more did you learn about Elijah, Jack?"

"Well, I guess that's about all I heard. He talked a lot more; but I got to thinking what a jolly thing 'twould be to lay down in the shade and sleep, or look up at the green branches or the blue sky and have those ravens bring you good things, and just have to hold your hand for 'em. And just think, grandmother, if every time you went to the flour barrel or the milk pitcher, you found more there, and just so with everything else, and you and I didn't have to work a bit!"

"I think," said grandmother, with a quiet smile, "that if you had listened more attentively, you would have made up your mind that Elijah had a pretty hard time. You did not hear how, at the Lord's bidding, he went about warning wicked people of the wrath of God which was coming upon them if they did not repent of their sins. And of the way in which he was hunted from place to place by these very people, who were so angry at being told of it that they would have killed him. It is not at all likely that in all your life you will ever know such hardships as he did."

"Anyway, I don't believe he ever had a better supper than that," said Jack, pushing away his bowl and springing up to be off at his work.

"You may be sure it tastes all the better because you have fairly earned it," said grandmother. "Don't ever get into your head the idea that it is not good to work. Work is a blessing. The happiest people in the world are those who can find plenty to do, and who do it with honest, hearty good-will. The Lord has given you active, lively feet and strong, skillful hands; do you think he meant them to lie idle? He has made good things to grow for us in fields and orchards and gardens; don't you think he intended that we should make use of them through cheery, industrious labor? 'The hand of the diligent maketh rich—'"

"There, now, grandmother," interrupted Jack, "I've heard you say that a thousand times; but you're always working, and you an't rich. Look how shabby the carpet is, and think how many things we don't have that we'd like to have."

"Not rich, Jack? Why, my boy, I would not change my riches for all the carpets and other fine things in the world. A good many years ago there was a dear, bright-faced boy very much like you. He wanted a good education, and he and his mother worked hard that he might have it, for they knew no riches were like the riches of the mind. And when the boy became a man, it was in his heart to preach the Lord's gospel; and wasn't his mother proud to work to help him lay up such riches as the Lord's workers do? And when he was ready to begin his work, there came a call from far over the sea, and he wanted to go, but said he must stay and make a home for his mother. But she said she could work still, and he went."

"It was my father," said Jack, softly.

"Yes, and years after, when he sent his little son home for her to take care of, she felt sure that she could work for him, too, and worked away with a fond hope of helping him to be a man like his father. Think, my boy, what riches I am laying up."

Jack put his arms around her neck, gave her a very earnest kiss, and thoughtfully buckled on his newspaper strap as she went on:—

"Be sure, my boy, there are no people so unhappy as those who are idle, and none who so soon come to ruin and misery. Why, you know yourself that you are never happier than when you bring me your week's earnings and feel proud of knowing that you are of some use in the world."

"That's so, grandmother," he said. "Only," he paused a moment on the doorstep, "I think it's almost time you were having a little rest. When I am a man, I'm going to be the ravens bringing good things to you."

And the next moment he was bounding out into the half-twilight, half-moonlight, singing:—

"Here's yer Evening Jour—nal. All about the 'léc—tion. Only two cents."—*Sidney Dare.*

The Floating Gardens of Mexico.

"The climate of Mexico is tropical, and its soil rich in flowers, trees, and shrubs, as in Asia; and it is no wonder that its natives learned long ago how to take pleasure in its natural beauties. Remains of gardens which might have been laid out long before Mexico was conquered by the Spaniards, still exist there, showing that the half-civilized races which dwelt in the southern part of our continent knew the art of decorating nature, and converting their wilds into delightful resorts.

"The first floating gardens consisted of masses of earth which became loosened from the mainland, and were held together by the roots which lay imbedded in them. Then the Aztecs [natives of Mexico at the time it was conquered by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century], seeing that it was possible to have floating gardens, made them out of rafts of reeds and rushes closely fastened together, and upon these a deep layer of rich earth was put. Thus moving islands were formed, sometimes several hundred feet long and three or four feet deep, and launched upon the water.

"It was upon these floating islands that the Aztecs grew the fruits, flowers, and vegetables which they sold in the markets along the shore. They would push their gardens right up to the borders of the town, and so float on from one town to another.

"These strange gardens had their origin in the necessities of a people of a certain locality, who, being shut in by their enemies, were forced to resort to some means to avoid famine.

"Finding themselves on the borders of a lake, they set to work to make floating islands; and on these they planted corn and other vegetables. They, then, by means of long poles, moved the floating gardens from one shore to another, and thus supplied the hungry people.

"In this way the Mexicans were saved from conquest; and so successful was the plan of making the floating gardens, that they became common, and instead of being used solely to raise food, they were planted with trees, and with flowers of the most brilliant colors and delicious perfume.

"These floating islands may still be seen in parts of Mexico. Prescott, the historian, speaks of them as 'moving like some enchanted isle over the water.'

"Many of the peasants, living in humble huts of brick or reeds along the shores of Lake Tezcuco, have these islands as their only farms, whereon they raise and sell the vegetables grown in Mexico, which need but little cultivation and care.

"Up to within a hundred years, beautiful floating gardens were still to be seen on this and other Mexican lakes. Sometimes quaint little edifices peeped from among their luxuriant shrubs and flower-beds. Sometimes the pretty paths were overhung with rich clusters of tropical fruits.

"Such were the gardens of the wealthy nobles of that time, who took holiday trips on their floating gardens, and might move smoothly over the waters, the servants propelling the verdant raft with long, slender poles. They could thus travel, reposing amid flower-beds and under deep and luxuriant shadows.

"There is a large Mexican city surrounded by a lake, the streets of which are a series of canals, as are those of Venice. Instead of driving carts and carriages to and fro, the people reach the houses by water. Here the floating gardens might once have been seen moving to and fro, bearing their still growing burden of fruit, corn, and flowers. The scene on a soft moonlit night, as the gardens passed here and there among the high rushes, or glided across the open, sparkling waters, must have been a very picturesque one."—*Baptist Weekly.*

One evening about Christmas, a gentleman was walking along a street in Toronto, with apparently no object in view but to pass the time. His attention was attracted by the remark of a little girl to a companion in front of a fruit stand.

"I wish I had an orange for ma."

The gentleman saw that the children, though poorly dressed, were neat and clean, and calling them into the store he loaded them with fruits and candies.

"What's your name?" asked one of the girls.

"Why do you want to know?" queried the gentleman.

"I want to pray for you," was the reply. The gentleman turned to leave, scarcely daring to speak, when the little one added,

"Well, it don't matter. God will know you, anyhow."—*Sel.*

He is Risen.

If our dear children will open their Bibles at the 28th chapter of Matthew, they will find the story of the two Mary's who went to the sepulchre where Jesus had been lain. They went that they might seek their Lord and Master, who had said, while he was yet alive, "After three days I will rise again."

We are sure our children will be interested in what they will find there.

E. M. B.

Persevere.

A TRUE STORY FOR BOYS.

One morning not long since a teacher of music was giving his usual lesson in a certain primary school of New England. He had requested several of the little people to sing alone the exercise upon the chart.

At length he turned to a bright-eyed little boy of five or six years old. The little fellow arose, his face aglow with interest, but he failed to sing even the first measure correctly. He repeated the attempt with the same result.

Had they been allowed to do so, several of the children were inclined to laugh at the discordant tones. The little boy turned questioningly his flushed face toward his teacher.

"I think you can't sing that to-day Johnnie."

"Yes'm, I can, please let me try again."

But it was a failure this time, and the music teacher himself said, "No, little boy, we will let some one else sing it. You have done your best, but it isn't quite right."

"Please, sir," said Johnnie timidly, yet standing firm as a soldier, "I *know* I can sing that piece." The gentleman smiled, thought of the few moments left, but replied, "You may try it again, my little man."

It was better this time, and after repeating it once or twice more, Johnnie stood triumphant. He had at last sung the exercise without a single mistake.

That boy will make a smart man. He will not turn aside for trifles. Such boys are wanted everywhere; boys who *can* and *will*.

It was the will of Napoleon, which he possessed from boyhood, together with sharp insight and good judgment that made the man a hero.

Be firm in the right.—*Little Sower.*

Do it at once. Never wait to be told a second time. Do just what you are told to do. Do not try to have your own way, even in part. Do it cheerfully. Do not go about it in a surly, cross, peevish way. Only cheerful obedience can be pleasing to God and man.

ENJOY present pleasures in such a way as not to injure future ones.

For the Myrtle.

Little Pilgrims.

Up the stairs, up the stairs,
Light little feet
Running to dream-land
Coyly and sweet.

Nice little journey
For ten little toes,
What they will find there
Nobody knows.

Angels in dream-land
Wait it is said,
Nightly for children
Who troop off to bed.

Wait with a welcome
For each of the dears,
And whisper sweet love-words
In all of their ears.

This is the reason
So lightly and fleet,
Up the stairs patter
The bare little feet.

This is the reason,
So joyful a band,
Eagerly run
Every night to dream-land.

E. M. B.

An Affectionate Thrush.

"A young Highlander, having set a horse-hair noose in the woods, was delighted one morning to find a female song-thrush entangled. He carried home his prize, put it into a roomy, open-braided basket, secured the lid with much string and many knots, and then hung the extemporized cage on a nail near the open window. In the afternoon the parish minister called in, and tried to persuade the boy to set the captive free. While the clergyman was examining the bird through the basket, his attention was called to another thrush, perched on a branch opposite the window.

"'Yes!' said the boy; 'it followed me home all the way from the woods.'

"It was the captive's mate, which, having faithfully followed his partner to her prison, had perched himself where he might see her, and she hear the sad, broken notes that chirped his grief.

"The clergyman hung the basket against the eaves of the cottage, and then the two retired to watch what might happen. In a few minutes the captive whispered a chirp to her mate's complaint. His joy was unbounded.

"Springing to the topmost spray of the tree, he trilled out two or three exultant notes, and then the captive thrust out her head and neck. Then followed a touching scene. The male bird, after billing and cooing with the captive, dressing her feathers and stroking her neck, all the while fluttering his wings, and crooning an undersong of encouragement, suddenly assumed another attitude.

"Gathering up his wings he began to peck and pull away at the edges of the hole in the basket's lid. The bird's ardent affection, and his effort to release his mate, touched clergyman, mother, and boy.

"'I'll let the bird go!' said he in a sympathetic voice as he saw his mother wiping her eyes with her apron.

"The basket was carried to the spot where the bird had been snared. The male thrush followed, sweeping occasionally close past the boy carrying the basket, and chirping abrupt notes, as if assuring his mate that he was still near her.

"On arriving at the snare, the clergyman began untying the many intricate knots which secured the lid, while the male bird, perched on a hazel bough, not six feet away, watched, silent and motionless, the process of liberation.

"As soon as the basket lid was raised, the female thrush dashed out with a scream of terror and joy, while the male followed like an arrow shot from a bow, and both disappeared behind a clump of birch trees."—*Sel.*

The Boy's Barley-Cakes.

Little did that Jewish mother think, as she ground the grain, and mixed the dough, and heated the oven, and gave the five cakes to her little boy as he started for the great out door meeting, that her little cakes, passing through the hands of the Prophet of Nazareth, were to feed the five thousand men who gathered to hear his words of grace. And little do we think, when we are doing some trifling service, how great a blessing God may pronounce upon the labor of our hands. What a story that boy had to tell his mother when he went home from the meeting; and what stories will be told to us when we reach the eternal home, and learn that our feeble service, our faintly spoken words, our little things done in the Master's name, have been crowned with a blessing that shall abide throughout eternity. Let us do our work heartily for God, and pray that he may accept the labor of our hands, and crown it with his eternal benediction. —*Sel.*

A "Try" Boy.

A gentleman travelling on the railroad made acquaintance with a fellow-passenger, who with his wife and little son occupied seats adjoining his own. The boy was a good-tempered, frank little fellow, whose bright ways and childish talk were very entertaining. He was busily engaged in trying to untie the knot of a parcel, which his new friend suggested he could not do, and offered to cut the string for him; but the prompt reply was, "Thank you, sir; but my papa never allowed me to say I can't. I belong to the try company."—*Sel.*

A BOY in an Alabama school was called on to parse the word "run." He stood up, scratched his head, shuffled his feet, and said nothing, till a classmate whispered to him that run was a verb. "Run is a verb," said the boy. "What sort of a verb?" asked the teacher. "It's a—it's a adverb," was the answer, which caused such a ripple of amuesment, the grammarian sat down.

ALWAYS remember, little boy, that a cheerful heart makes the rough ways smooth."

SELECTIONS FOR S. S. CONCERTS.

Something that Should be Learned by Heart.

How many bones in the human face ?
Fourteen when they're all in place.

How many bones in the human head ?
Eight, my boy, as I've often said.

How many bones in the human ear ?
Three in each, and they help to hear.

How many bones in the human spine ?
Twenty-six, like a climbing vine.

How many bones in the human chest ?
Twenty-four ribs, and two of the rest.

How many bones in the shoulder bind ?
Two in each—one before and behind.

How many bones in the human arm ?
In each one, two in each forearm.

How many bones in the human wrist ?
Eight in each, if none are missed.

How many bones in the palm of the hand ?
Five in each, with many a band.

How many bones in the fingers ten ?
Twenty-eight, and by the joints they bend.

How many bones in the human hip ?
One in each, like a dish they tip.

How many bones in the human thigh ?
One in each, and deep they lie.

How many bones in the human knees ?
One in each, the kneepan. please.

How many bones from the leg to the knee ?
Two in each, we can plainly see.

How many bones in the ankle strong ?
Seven in each, but none are long.

How many bones in the ball of the foot ?
Five in each, as the palms were put.

How many bones in the toes half a score ?
Twenty-eight, and there are no more.

And now altogether these many bones fix,
And they count in the body two hundred and six.

And then we have the human mouth,
Of upper and under thirty-two teeth.

And now and then have a bone, I should think,
That forms on a joint, or to fill up a chink.

A sosamoid bone, or a wormain, we call,
And now we may rest, for we've told them all.

The Honest Old Toad.

Oh, a queer little chap is the honest old toad,
A funny old fellow is he ;
Living under the stone by the side of the road,
'Neath the shade of the old willow tree.
He is dressed all in brown from his toe to his crown,
Save his vest. that is silvery white.
He takes a long nap in the heat of the day,
And walks in the cool, dewy night.
"Raup, yaup," says the frog,
From his home in the bog.
But the toad he says never a word ;
He tried to be good, like the children who should
Be seen, but never be heard.

When winter draws near, Mr. Toad goes to bed,
And sleeps just as sound as a top.
But when May blossoms follow soft April showers,
He comes out with a skip, jump, and hop ;
He changes his dress only once, I confess,—
Every spring ; and his old worn-out coat,
With trousers and waistcoat, he rolls in a ball,
And stuffs the whole thing down his throat.
"K-rruk, k-rruk, says the frog,
From his home in the bog ;
But the toad he says never a word.
He tries to be good, like the children who should
Be seen, but never be heard.

Trust.

Patter, patter on the old porch roof,
Like the sound of summer rain,
Shyly keeping just aloof
From watching eyes near window-pane,
The little feet of sparrows come,
And, over every friendly crumb,
Let fall by some bird-loving hand,
The tiny saints make feasting grand.
One crumb apiece for hungry throats.
To summon forth such merry notes
Of cheerful gratitude—it shames me quite,
That I do not receive my daily mite
With equal joy—and let *mg* crumb a day
Send me contented to my work away.

A little theft, a small deceit,
Too often leads to more ;
'Tis hard at first but tempts the feet
As through an open door.
Just as the broadest rivers run
From small and distant springs,
The greatest crimes that men have done
Have grown from little things.

"Dear little children, waste not the day, .
Always remember that work sweetens play."

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

262. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 33 letters.

My 5, 29, 17, 7, 20, 23, 20, 4, 18 is a place for worship.

My 31, 25, 30, 27, 13, 24 is found but once in the Bible.

My 2, 31, 25, 1, 2, 18, 17 worship idols.

My 25, 24, 19, 26, 14, 11, 9, 10, 18 was one of the greatest philosophers.

My 31, 26, 1, 6, 13, 24 is a book in the Old Testament.

My 22, 16, 24, 3, 17 was a poet.

My 22, 18, 18, 9, 28, 3, 12, 31, 17 was a great musician.

My 4, 17, 19, 12, 18, 24, 30, 25, 8, 19, 5, 14 is the church that I go to.

My 32, 13, 7, 33 grows on trees.

My 15, 7, 17, 17, 7, 21 is a girl's name.

My whole is in the Bible.

Bertha S. Bucklin.

263. — ANAGRAM.

Eb indk ni lal uoy asy ro od. *Ethol Brown.*

264. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 26 letters.

My 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 21 is the title applied to a man.

My 9, 10, 11 it is wrong to do.

My 16, 17, 23, 4 is a part of the body.

My 18, 22, 1 is not old.

My 2, 19 is a verb.

My 12, 5 is a preposition.

My 3, 15, 13, 14, 23 is part of a ship.

My 20, 26, 17, 25 is a conjunction.

My 24, 5 is a verb.

My whole is a true saying. *Emma Cushing.*

265. — DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A consonant: What we lay at the door: What flows through the land: What we drink: A consonant.

Clara Churchill.

266. — ANAGRAM.

Trsiev ot od grith. *Nellie.*

267. — ENIGMA.

I am composed or 28 letters.

My 5, 6, 7, 8 is an animal.

My 1, 23, 13 is a conjunction.

My 24, 3 is a pronoun.

My 21, 14, 23 is what all do.

My 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 is a young human.

My 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 is contented.

My 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 is forever.

My 4, 3, 2, 15 is not more.

My whole is a true saying. *Ida Butterfield.*

CONNUDRUM.

What is hard to beat? A carpet.

256. — ENIGMA.

Birds of a feather flock together.

257. — DIAMOND PUZZLE.

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258. — ENIGMA.

A new broom sweeps clean.

259. — ANAGRAM.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

260. — ENIGMA.

A rolling stone gathers no moss.

261. — DROP LETTER PUZZLE.

Be what you seem to be.

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